

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 1072

92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATORS DOUGHERTY, KENNEDY, COLEMAN, BRAY, RUSSELL,
CHILDERS AND DAYS.

Read 1st time January 14, 2004, and ordered printed.

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

3575S.02I

AN ACT

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to the creation of the Hope scholarship program.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 173, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 173.240, to read as follows:

173.240. 1. There is hereby established the "Hope Scholarship Program", which shall be administered by the department of elementary and secondary education. The program shall, upon appropriation, provide scholarships, subject to the eligibility criteria enumerated in this section, for eligible students who enter a teacher education program and make a commitment to teach as a condition of receiving such scholarship.

2. Subject to appropriation, each year the department of elementary and secondary education shall make available to eligible students up to one hundred, four-year hope scholarships in an amount that encompasses the total cost of eligible students' tuition and fees at a four-year college or university located in Missouri.

3. As used in this section, the term "eligible student" shall mean an individual who:

(1) Is a United States citizen and a Missouri resident who attended a Missouri high school;

(2) Enters and makes a commitment to pursue a teacher education program approved by the department of elementary and secondary education and offered by a four-year college or university located in Missouri;

(3) Signs an agreement with the department of elementary and secondary education in which the recipient agrees to teach in a Missouri public high school,

the population of which includes a higher than average "at-risk student population" as such term shall be defined by the department of elementary and secondary education, for two years for every one year the recipient received the Hope scholarship;

(4) Has graduated from high school with a cumulative grade point average of at least two and one-half on a four-point scale or equivalent;

(5) Maintains a cumulative grade point average of at least two and one-half on a four-point scale or equivalent.

4. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of scholarships or revenues available, the department of elementary and secondary education may consider the financial needs of the applicant.

5. The scholarships provided in this section shall be available to otherwise eligible students who either:

(1) Are currently enrolled in a community college and make a commitment to pursue a teacher education program approved by the department of elementary and secondary education and offered by a four-year college or university located in Missouri; or

(2) Have completed their baccalaureate degree and agree to enter a teacher education program and make a commitment to pursue a teacher education program approved by the department of elementary and secondary education and offered by a four-year college or university located in Missouri.

6. Every eligible student receiving scholarships pursuant to the provisions of this section shall teach in an elementary or secondary public school in Missouri as provided in subdivision (3) of subsection 3 of this section. The student shall teach for a period of two years for every one year they received a Hope scholarship or the scholarship shall be treated as a loan to the eligible student and interest at the rate of nine and one-half percent per year shall be charged upon the unpaid balance of the amount received from the date the eligible student ceases to teach until the amount received is paid back to the state. In order to provide for the servicing of such loans, the department of elementary and secondary education may sell such loans to the higher education loan authority of the state of Missouri created pursuant to sections 173.350 to 173.445. For each year that the student teaches, up to eight years, one-eighth of the amount which was received pursuant to this section shall be applied against the total amount received and shall not be subject to the repayment requirement of this section. The department of elementary and secondary education shall have the power to and shall defer interest and principal payments under certain circumstances, which shall include, but need not be limited to, the enrollment in a graduate program or service in any

branch of the armed forces of the United States.

7. There is hereby established in the state treasury a fund to be known as the "Hope Scholarship Fund", which shall consist of all moneys that may be appropriated to it by the general assembly, and in addition may include any gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests received from federal, state, private, or other sources. The fund shall be administered by the department of elementary and secondary education. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080, RSMo, to the contrary, moneys in the Hope scholarship fund shall not be transferred to the credit of the general revenue fund at the end of the biennium. Interest and moneys earned on the fund shall be credited to the fund. Moneys in the fund shall be used solely for the purpose of awarding Hope scholarships pursuant to the provisions of this section.

8. In order to help fund the Hope scholarship program, the department of elementary and secondary education shall investigate means of funding the program, including, but not limited to, requesting waivers from the federal government in Title II dollars.

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